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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8561

INFO AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

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AMEMBASSY BERLIN

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, YO, CSCE, FR

SUBJECT: YUGOSLAV PRIME MINISTER BJEDIC'S VISIT TO
FRANCE

REF: (A) PARIS 02295, (B) PARIS 02461, (C) PARIS 05014

L. SUMMARY: YUGOSLAV PRIME MINISTER BJEDIC'S VISIT TO
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PARIS SERVED MAIN PURPOSE OF RELAUNCHING FRENCH-YUGOSLAV

RELATIONS. GISCARD WILL VISIT BELGRADE NEXT SEPTEMBER. LAGGING ECONOMIC RELATIONS ARE BEING REVIEWED. AND, ACCORDING TO QUAI, DECISION WAS TAKEN IN PRINCIPLE TO SELL ARMS TO GOY CONSISTENT WITH FRENCH SECURITY INTERESTS. YUGOSLAVS PRIMARILY INTERESTED IN FRENCH ANTI-TANK MISSILES AND MIRAGES. CONCRETE TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL DECISIONS REMAIN TO BE MADE. VISIT ALSO ELICITED ACCOUNT OF PRELIMINARY GOY THINKING ABOUT CSCE REVIEW CONFERENCE IN BELGRADE NEXT YEAR. END SUMMARY.

2. QUAI'S EASTERN EUROPEAN CHIEF LEQUERTIER CONSIDERS BJEDIC'S PARIS VISIT FEBRUARY 16-18 FULLY MET FRENCH OBJECTIVE AS FIRST STEP TOWARD RE-ESTABLISHING SUBSTANTIALLY MORE ACTIVE RELATIONS WITH YUGOSLAVIA DURING UPCOMING DELICATE SUCCESSION PERIOD (REF A). BJEDIC PERSONALLY TURNED TO BE COLORLESS, RATHER LIMITED PERSONALITY. EVEN SO MAIN PURPOSES WERE SERVED IN SETTING STAGE FOR MORE INTENSE PROGRAM OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CONTACTS. MOREOVER, IN QUAI VIEW YUGOSLAV PRESS ADEQUATELY REFLECTED PARIS RESULTS.

3. LEQUERTIER SAYS THAT FRENCH MADE EVERY POSSIBLE EFFORT TO DEMONSTRATE IMPORTANCE THEY ATTACHED TO VISIT. BJEDIC HAD LUNCH WITH GISCARD, TWO TETE-A-TETE MEETINGS WITH CHIRAC AS WELL AS A LONG WORKING SESSION WITH SAUVAGNARGUES. THERE WERE CONCURRENT MEETINGS OF THE YUGOSLAV-FRENCH MIXED COMMISSION, CHAIRED BY FRENCH EXTERNAL COMMERCE MINISTER BARRE AND HIS COUNTERPART JANKO SMOLE. THERE WAS ALSO LENGTHY SESSION ON INTERNATIONAL ISSUES BETWEEN QUAI SEC GEN DE COURCEL AND YUGO DEPUTY FONMIN MOJSOV, WHICH GAINED IN IMPORTANCE SINCE BJEDIC HIMSELF DID NOT SHOW HIMSELF VERY APT CONVERSATION PARTNER BEYOND BILATERAL AND GENERAL POLICY ISSUES.

4. LEQUERTIER SUMMED UP RESULTS AS FOLLOWS: AS COMMUNIQUE INDICATED (REF C) GISCARD WILL MAKE FIRST OFFICIAL PRESIDENTIAL VISIT EVER TO YUGOSLAVIA. NO DATE HAS BEEN PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED. LEQUERTIER SAID ON CONFIDENTIAL

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BASIS THAT IT WILL TAKE PLACE IN MID-SEPTEMBER.

5. PROGRESS WAS ALSO MADE TOWARD BREATHING NEW LIFE INTO DETERIORATING FRENCH-YUGOSLAV ECONOMIC RELATIONS. CONVERSATIONS FACED FACT THAT YUGOSLAVS WERE IMPORTING ABOUT THREE TIMES AS MUCH AS THEY WERE EXPORTING TO FRANCE; THAT SITUATION WAS IF ANYTHING STILL GETTING WORSE (QUAI SAYS YUGOSLAV IMPORTS ROSE 12 IN 1975, CONFIDENTIAL

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WHILE EXPORTS TO FRANCE DROPPED 20); AND THAT REMIT-

TANCES OF YUGOSLAV WORKERS IN FRANCE WERE NO LONGER SUFFICIENT TO COVER DEFICIT. WHILE CURRENT ECONOMIC RECOVERY WOULD CAUSE SOME IMPROVEMENT, FRENCH WERE NEVERTHELESS ANXIOUS THAT YUGOSLAVS APPRECIATE FULL SERIOUSNESS OF SITUATION.

6. AS RESULT IT WAS AGREED GOY WILL SHORTLY SUBMIT LIST OF PRODUCTS AND PROJECTS SUITABLE FOR EXPORT TO FRANCE, WHILE GOF UNDERTOOK MAKE SUBSTANTIAL EFFORT (WITHIN REALM OF POSSIBLE) TO ENCOURAGE POSITIVE FRENCH REACTIONS. PRIORITY AREAS WILL BE MARITIME CONSTRUCTION (PRESUMABLY SOME UPCOMING FRENCH CONTRACTS COULD BE GIVEN YUGO SHIPYARDS); ELECTRIC GENERATING EQUIPMENT AND CONSTRUCTION; AND TELEPHONE AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT. QUAI ALSO ENCOURAGED IDEA OF A YUGOSLAV-FRENCH BANK, BUT HAS ALREADY RUN INTO RESISTANCE FROM CERTAIN FRENCH BANKERS WHO CONSIDER YUGOSLAVIA RELIABLE BUT TOO INDEBTED TO BE ADVANTAGEOUS BANKING PARTNER. LEQUERTIER CONCLUDED THAT, FOLLOWING FURTHER STAFFWORK IN COMING MONTHS, THE MIXED COMMISSION WOULD TRY MOVE SITUATION ANOTHER STEP FORWARD AT ITS NEXT MEETING IN BELGRADE IN JUNE. HE ADDED THAT BJEDIC ALSO DISCUSSED YUGOSLAV-EEC RELATIONS ALONG STANDARD LINES, EMPHASIZING BELGRADE'S NEED FOR CONTINUED FRENCH SUPPORT IN BRUSSELS.

7. AS EXPECTED, OTHER MAIN QUESTION INVOLVED POSSIBLE FRENCH ARMS SALES TO YUGOSLAVIA. LEQUERTIER SAYS INTERNAL FRENCH DIFFERENCES THIS SUBJECT (REPORTED REFS A AND B) HAD BEEN RESOLVED TO EXTENT THAT CHIRAC WAS ABLE TO TELL BJEDIC THAT FRENCH WERE PREPARED "IN PRINCIPLE" TO CONSIDER YUGOSLAV ARMS PURCHASE REQUESTS, EVEN FOR CERTAIN SOPHISTICATED SYSTEMS, CONSISTENT WITH FRANCE'S OWN SECURITY REQUIREMENTS. LEQUERTIER SAYS INTERNAL ARGUMENT WAS ACRIMONIOUS AND ULTIMATELY RESOLVED BY GISCARD WHO AGREED WITH QUAI THAT YUGOSLAVIA'S SECURITY NEEDS WERE IMPORTANT, PARTICULARLY DURING TRANSITION PERIOD. ANOTHER REPORTEDLY TELLING ARGUMENT MADE WAS THAT IT IS UNREASONABLE FOR FRENCH TO TREAT YUGOSLAVS WORSE IN THIS REGARD THAN CERTAIN ARABIAN

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POTENTATES.

8. ON OTHER HAND, LEQUERTIER WAS CAREFUL TO STRESS THAT THIS DECISION ONLY IMPLIES THAT THERE IS NO FRENCH ARMS EMBARGO VIS-A-VIS YUGOSLAVIA WHILE THE HARD TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL QUESTIONS REMAIN TO BE RESOLVED. LEQUERTIER INDICATED YUGOSLAV SHOPPING LIST "VERY CLOSELY" PARALLELS LIST PROVIDED STATE 049066, FOR WHICH HE

EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE APPRECIATION. IN THEIR DISCUSSIONS IN PARIS YUGOS (GENERAL SUSNJAR) PLACED MAIN EMPHASIS ON THEIR NEED FOR "HOT" AND "MILAN" MISSILES (MEDIUM ANTI-TANK) AND SECOND EMPHASIS ON MIRAGES. QUAI THINKS YUGOSLAVS IN END WILL PROBABLY NOT BUY MORE

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THAN SMALL NUMBER OF MIRAGES, WHICH THEY CANNOT AFFORD,

AND MAY WELL HAVE TO SETTLE FOR PLANE CURRENTLY BEING CO-PRODUCED WITH ROMANIANS. ENTIRE ISSUE OF ARMS SALES WILL NOW REVERT TO YUGOSLAV-FRENCH MIXED MILITARY COMMISSION, WHILE FRENCH THEMSELVES WILL HAVE TASK OF DEFINING MORE PRECISELY WHAT CHIRAC'S OK IN PRINCIPLE MEANS IN CONCRETE TERMS.

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9. MAIN INTERNATIONAL ISSUES DISCUSSED BY MOJSOV AND DE COURCEL WERE:

(A) CSCE: MOJSOV BLAMED U.S. "OVEREAGERNESS" FOR PARTICULARLY NEGATIVE USSR REACTION TO CSCE IMPLEMENTATION AFTER HELSINKI, A THEME WITH WHICH FRENCH UNDOUBTEDLY AGREED. AS FOR FUTURE, GOY IS ALREADY BEGINNING PREPARATIONS FOR THE 1977 CSCE REVIEW CONFERENCE, WHICH THEY WANT TO PRODUCE "TANGIBLE RESULTS" IN SEVERAL SPECIFIC FIELDS. TO THIS END YUGOSLAVS HAVE BEGUN SOME BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS, NOTABLY WITH USSR, AUSTRIA AND FINLAND. CONTACT WITH SOVIETS TOOK FORM OF VISIT BY AMBASSADOR MENDELIVITCH, WHOM CSCE ALUMNI WILL REMEMBER, TO BELGRADE. YUGOSLAVS INDICATED THEY WOULD UNDERTAKE MULTILATERAL CONSULTATIONS SOMEWHAT LATER. AS FOR DATES, YUGOSLAVS WANT THE 1977 MINISTERIAL MEETING TO TAKE PLACE IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE EXPERTS MEETING TENTATIVELY PLANNED FOR JUNE. FRENCH RESPONDED THAT THEY WANT DISTINCT GAP BETWEEN MEETINGS PLACING SENIOR MEETING AROUND MIDDLE OF SEPTEMBER. AS FOR REVIEW CONFERENCE AS WHOLE, FRENCH TOOK THEIR TRADITIONAL, WELL-KNOWN RESERVED POSITION.

(B) OTHER ISSUES: AS REGARDS ANGOLA, YUGOSLAVS ARGUED THAT NETO WAS ANXIOUS TO BECOME NON-ALIGNED AND DID NOT WANT TO BE EXCLUSIVELY DEPENDENT ON USSR. YUGOSLAVIA WILL THEREFORE CONTINUE TO GIVE HIM TANGIBLE SUPPORT. WITH RESPECT ALBANIA, YUGOSLAVS SEE PRESENT CONVULSIONS AS BEGINNING OF SUCCESSION FIGHT, PLAYED OUT IN TERMS OF STRUGGLE BETWEEN "HARDLINERS" (THE PRESENT INGROUP) VERSUS "REVISIONISTS." SO FAR THE FORMER ARE HOLDING ON. ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN YUGOSLAVIA REMAIN UNAFFECTED. OTHER TOPICS WERE CYPRUS, THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE.

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